

Britannica Lesson Plan: Through the Doors of Valhalla



Subject: English (D&T, History)

Date:

Length of Session:
3 days at 60 minutes each

Prior Learning: No prior learning is necessary, but this lesson could be used as part of a wider study of Vikings, mythology, or Vikings' role in North America.

Learning Objective: Students will create a written creative piece about Valhalla that shows evidence of research. Students will also create a physical representation of Valhalla.

Success Criteria: The creative works should show strong evidence of research into Viking history and mythology and a Works Cited page should be included.

Curriculum standards:

Resources: Computers (or devices) with Internet access, workbooks, other research resources on Vikings and Viking mythology, supplies for projects (markers, paint, shoeboxes for dioramas, etc.)

Vocabulary:

Longship
Raid
Plunder
Myth

Organisation: The creative writing might best be suited for an individual, but team-writing is a consideration. The physical representation could also be a group activity depending on the supplies and the amount of class time available.

Support Staff

Activities:

Support staff should help students with researching and understanding resources and could also help students to plan their creative writing work.

Britannica School resources/links:

Vikings article: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/277601>

Leif Eriksson article: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/440873>

Mythology article: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/276009>

Odin article: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/312626>

Thor article: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/313835>

Viking manuscript image: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/28702/media?assemblyId=111031>

Longship image: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/48889/media?assemblyId=7941>

Leif Eriksson image: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/440873/media?assemblyId=105526>

Ship figurehead image: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/34241/media?assemblyId=5472>

Viking burial ship image: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/277601/media?assemblyId=151561>

Viking cart image: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/20531/media?assemblyId=124286>

Viking burial ground image: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/106173/media?assemblyId=89270>

Viking travel video: <http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/intermediate/article/442018/media?assemblyId=184540>

View this lesson plan in Britannica School here:

<http://school.eb.co.uk/levels/foundation/lessons/view/2904>

Time:	Teacher's Activity:	Students' Activities:
Day 1		
10 minutes	Open up the lesson by asking students what they already know about Vikings and Viking mythology. Encourage them to think of popular culture representations of Vikings (How to Train your Dragon movie, Thor of the Avengers, Fenrir Greyback from Harry Potter, etc.) If this lesson comes during a unit on Vikings, students may already have a good understanding of Vikings and Norse mythology, so it might be more appropriate to create a bank of key words.	Students could form groups to brainstorm facts they know about Vikings or this could be a full class activity. Students may instead think up a few key words.
30 minutes	Assist students in research as necessary.	Students should use Britannica School to research Vikings, including their physical appearance, celebrations, Valhalla and other related information. The content in this lesson plan can simply be a starting point and students could also use journals and Web's Best Sites, plus books and other web sites for further information. Students can favourite information in their My Britannica areas or they could keep notes on a worksheet/in a notebook to hand in for later.
20 minutes	Explain to students they will be writing a short, descriptive story about visiting Valhalla. If the class is working on any specific grammar or punctuation goals, you could ask students to include these in the story. Students could be requested to finish their stories for homework.	Students should include information from their research and also focus on what Valhalla looks like, who's there (including a description of Odin and other gods) and what activities they witness. They could do this from the point of view of a warrior who died on the battlefield, a Norse god, a Valkyrie or even a human who is not supposed to be there.
Day 2		
30 minutes	If students are peer editing, you could remind them of the grammar and punctuation requirements and also ask them to think about how the description and action of the story could be improved (perhaps by using challenging vocabulary or literary devices such as similes – review these as necessary).	If students do not finish their stories for homework, they could use class time to do so. They could also highlight in their stories those sentences that are supported by their research. If they did finish their stories, they can work in pairs to peer edit.

30 minutes	Choose groups if necessary for differentiation purposes. Observe student discussions and direct students where necessary. Make students aware of any limitations necessary (such as if they will be creating a picture, a diorama, a digital drawing or a booklet, and if you would like students to complete this at home).	In groups, students should begin to brainstorm how they would like to visually represent Valhalla. Students should use research to justify their additions to the project. This time could also be used to begin the project, either in groups or individually.
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Day 3

20 minutes	Answer any student questions while they finish their project.	Students could use this time to finish their projects as necessary.
40 minutes	Present students with marking schemes or ask them to help create these – they could ask students to rate (1-5) peers’ work on areas such as creativity, neatness and evidence of research. Students could also write down one thing they liked, one thing they thought needed improvement and one thing they would like to know more about. This peer review could be collected and organised before being handed back to the student to keep the markers anonymous and so that you can review any comments before they are handed back to students. An alternative to peer marking would be to ask students to self-mark and write a brief paragraph on what research they used to create their projects. For self-assessment, the “like, improve, know more” scheme might work best.	Peer mark other students’ work or self-assess.

Plenary: Tell students they are in charge of the dinner menu for a feast at Valhalla. Ask them to list three menu items they would add to the menu. Encourage students to make up food items, but remind them they will need to further describe these so the rest of the class knows the ingredients. Have students volunteer to read theirs if there is time!

Differentiation: Many of the tasks in this lesson can be done in groups, with more able students supporting those who need additional help. Pre-selecting research information for less able students can also better direct them in what they will need to include in their stories and projects.

Extension Activity: Students could be asked to create their own Norse god. Ask them to think about what this individual will be the god of (for example, god of seasons, apples or shopping) and then create a description of this individual and character traits. Students could even write a short mythical tale about that god.

Assessment Opportunities: A marking scheme could include a specific number of resources accessed for the works cited page. For the physical piece, students will need to justify (oral or written) what they have included in that piece (a marking scheme could include the level of detail informed by research and also the creativity of representation).